

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14 remain in this application.

The Office Action states that the declaration is defective because the filing date for the foreign application on which priority is claimed does not match the filing date specified in the declaration. The filing date of the priority document specified in the declaration is June 13, 2000. Attached hereto is a copy of an English translation of the face page of the Japanese priority document, which states the submission date as being June 13, 2000.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,425,680 to Young in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,984,815 to Baddaria and 5,045,031 to Thomey. The Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14, as presently recited, are not unpatentable over Young in view of Baddaria and Thomey.

As the Office Action recognizes, Young does not disclose a friction surface disposed between the second blade shoe portion and the sliding face of the base. However, Young also does not disclose a friction surface disposed between a second blade shoe portion and a sliding face of the base, where the coefficient of friction between the friction surface and the second blade shoe portion is different from the friction surface between the sliding face of the base and the second blade shoe portion. Instead, Young merely discloses a blade shoe that is slidable directly on a bracket 46. Young does not teach providing a different coefficient of friction other than that existing between the second end of the blade shoe 30 and the bracket 46. Therefore, Young does not teach the tensioner and method of applying tension as recited in claims 1 and 13, and the improved dampening that can be achieved with the claimed tensioner and method.

The Office Action asserts that Thomey discloses a blade shoe 56 slidable on a base having a sliding face 62, and a friction surface 64 disposed between the blade shoe 56 and the sliding face 62 of the base. However, contrary to the assertion in the Office Action, Thomey does not disclose a blade shoe. Instead, member 56 of Thomey is described as a leg. There is no disclosure of a blade spring in Thomey for use with the leg. As set forth in the prior amendment, Thomey uses a compression spring 30, and not blade springs, to rotate a pivot arm 28 about a pivot 32 to tension a belt 12 using a pulley 24 attached to the

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pivot arm. Thus, Thomey teaches away from the use of its leg 56, tensioned by a compression spring 30, in the tensioners of Young and Baddaria, which are tensioned by blade springs.


In addition, Thomey does not teach having a second end of a blade shoe freely slidable relative to a base sliding surface. Instead, Thomey teaches that the arm 56 slides between the face 62 of the support structure and leg 68 of the leaf spring 58. Indeed, the leaf use of the leaf spring 58 of Thomey teaches away a freely slidable blade spring end, as Thomey (col. 4, ll. 64-67) describes that the spring 58 provides a substantially constant damping force. Thus, Thomey teaches away from its combination with Young and Baddaria.

For the reasons set forth above, claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14 are believed to be allowable, and reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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